

# STILL MORNING



ERIC SHANFIELD



# STILL MORNING

Eric Shanfield | ENS.2007.4, rev. 2016 | 6'  
poems by Yvor Winters

Soprano *or* Tenor

Clarinet in B $\flat$

Piano

Score in C.

All grace notes to be played before the beat.

*Still Morning* represents a breakthrough in my work whose deliberate brevity belies its importance. It was in this piece I discovered a way to fuse my earlier interest in repetitive cellular composition with the freer approach I'd been taking in the vocal compositions which had come to dominate my output. At the time I was listening to a lot of Webern, whose music I love but whose harmonic and melodic approach is foreign to my own sensibilities, and as a lover of miniatures I wondered, can there be a tiny minimalism? Can Webern and Philip Glass be made to coexist?

In *Wideawake*, then my most recently completed work, I had composed a cycle of very short songs, each consisting of a vocal line over a single repeating instrumental cell. Suddenly I realized that given a group of very short texts—haiku, for instance, or a poem with several small sections—each individual text could be set to a brief vocal melody over a repeating musical phrase. In this way the sequence of settings would be musically continuous yet consisting essentially of a series of single gestures.

I knew that if I were to attempt something like this I would need to find just the right text, and immediately had one in mind. In his brief tenure as an imagist poet before turning to rhyming, metered verse, Yvor Winters wrote a shockingly brief book, *The Magpie's Shadow*, comprised entirely of wonderfully evocative six-syllable poems. These were arranged into three parts following the seasons (with summer and autumn elided), allowing for a nicely proportioned three-movement work. Additionally, the syllabic constraint resulted in settings roughly equal in size, allowing for a structural continuity of musical cells similar in length and affect.

After composing vocal melodies and a single line of repeating cells unified by the predominance of certain intervals and general similarity of shape, I thought for a while about what instrumentation I wanted to use. At first I wanted more than one instrument to emphasize the unison quality of the piece, but eventually I settled on the simple combination of clarinet and piano.

In the first movement the instruments play entirely in unison; in the second they play in unison but alternatively; finally the third is more orchestrated and elaborate. Nevertheless, the accompaniment is always one single line of repeated musical phrases.

STILL MORNING  
music by Eric Shanfield  
poems by Yvor Winters

The Magpie's Shadow

I. In Winter

*Myself*  
Pale mornings, and  
I rise.

*Still Morning*  
Snow air—my fingers curl.

*Awakening*  
New snow, O pine of dawn!

*Winter Echo*  
Thin air! My mind is gone.

*The Hunter*  
Run! In the magpie's shadow.

*No Being*  
I, bent. Thin nights receding.

II. In Spring

*Spring*  
I walk out the world's door.

*May*  
Oh, evening in my hair!

*Spring Rain*  
My doorframe smells of leaves.

*Song*  
Why should I stop  
for spring?

III. In Summer and Autumn

*Sunrise*  
Pale bees! O whither now?

*Fields*  
I did not pick  
a flower.

*At Evening*  
Like leaves my feet passed by.

*Cool Nights*  
At night bare feet on flowers!

*Sleep*  
Like winds my eyelids close.

*The Aspen's Song*  
The summer holds me here.

*The Walker*  
In dream my feet are still.

*Blue Mountain*  
A deer walks that mountain.

*God of Roads*  
I, peregrine of noon.

*September*  
Faint gold! O think not here.

*A Lady*  
She's sun on autumn leaves.

*Alone*  
I saw day's shadow strike.

*A Deer*  
The trees rose in the dawn.

*Man in Desert*  
His feet run as eyes blink.

*Desert*  
The tented autumn, gone!

*The End*  
Dawn rose, and desert shrunk.

*High Valleys*  
In sleep I filled these lands.

*Awaiting Snow*  
The well of autumn—dry.

# STILL MORNING

Yvor Winters

I. IN WINTER

Eric Shanfield

**♩=108**  
*Myself* *mf*

Soprano

Clarinet in B $\flat$

Piano

Pale mor - nings, and

**6** **7** *Still Morning* *mf*

Sop.

Cl.

Pno.

I rise... Snow air - my fin - gers curl.

**12** *Awakening* *f*

Sop.

Cl.

Pno.

New snow, O pine of dawn!

STILL MORNING - I. IN WINTER

2

**17** *Winter Echo* *mp*

Sop. *mp*  
Thin air! My mind is gone.

Cl. *mp*

Pno. *mp*

This musical score for 'Winter Echo' is in 7/8 time. The Soprano part begins with a rest, followed by the lyrics 'Thin air! My mind is gone.' The Clarinet part plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The Piano part features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the bass line.

**23** *The Hunter* *mf*

Sop. *mf*  
Run! In the mag - pie's sha - dow.

Cl. *mf*

Pno. *mf*

This musical score for 'The Hunter' is in 7/8 time. The Soprano part starts with a rest and then sings 'Run! In the mag - pie's sha - dow.' The Clarinet part includes a triplet of eighth notes. The Piano part provides a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth notes and slurs.

**28** *No Being* *f*

Sop. *f*  
I, bent.

Cl. *f*

Pno. *f*

This musical score for 'No Being' is in 5/8 time. The Soprano part begins with a rest and then sings 'I, bent.' The Clarinet part plays a melodic line with slurs. The Piano part features a complex accompaniment with slurs and a wavy line in the right hand.

STILL MORNING - I. IN WINTER

34

Sop.

Thin nights re - ce - ding.

Cl.

*p*

Pno.

*p*

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Soprano (Sop.), Clarinet (Cl.), and Piano (Pno.). The score is for measures 34 through 38. The Soprano part begins with the lyrics 'Thin nights re - ce - ding.' and features a melodic line with a long note on 'ding.' The Clarinet part has a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) in measure 37. The Piano part has a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) in measure 37. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4.

# STILL MORNING

## II. IN SPRING

Yvor Winters

Eric Shanfield

**♩=138**  
*Spring*

Soprano *f*

Clarinet in B $\flat$  *f*

Piano *f*

5 **8** *May*

Sop. walk out the world's door. Oh,

Cl.

Pno. *f*

10 **14** *Spring Rain*

Sop. eve - ning in my hair!

Cl.

Pno.



16

Sop. *mp*  
My door - frame \_\_\_\_\_ smells of leaves. \_\_\_\_\_

Cl. *mp*

Pno. *mp*

23 Song

Sop. *mf*  
Why should I

Cl. *mf*

Pno. *mf*

28

Sop.  
stop for spring? \_\_\_\_\_

Cl.

Pno.

# STILL MORNING

## III. IN SUMMER AND AUTUMN

Yvor Winters

Eric Shanfield

$\text{♩} = 120$   
*Sunrise*

Soprano *p*  
Pale \_\_\_\_\_ bees! \_\_\_\_\_

Clarinet in Bb

Piano *p*

7

Sop. O whi - ther now? \_\_\_\_\_

Cl.

Pno.

12 *Fields* *mp* 16 *At Evening* *mf*

Sop. I \_\_\_\_\_ did not pick a flow - er. Like

Cl. *mf*

Pno. *mp* *mf*

18

Sop. leaves \_\_\_\_\_ my feet passed by. \_\_\_\_\_

Cl.

Pno.

24

*Cool Nights*

Sop. *mp* At night\_ bare.

Cl. *mp*

Pno. *mp*

29

Sop. *mf* feet \_\_\_\_\_ *mp* on flow - ers! \_\_\_\_\_

Cl. *mf* *mp*

Pno. *mf* *mp*

STILL MORNING - III. IN SUMMER AND AUTUMN

8

**34** *Sleep* *mf*

Sop. Like winds \_\_\_\_\_ my eye - lids

Cl. *mf*

Pno. *mf*

**41** *The Aspen's Song* *mf*

Sop. fall. \_\_\_\_\_ The sum-mer holds me

Cl.

Pno.

**47** *The Walker* *mf*

Sop. here. \_\_\_\_\_ In

Cl.

Pno. *sim.*

51

Sop. *mf*  
 dream my feet are still.

Cl.

Pno.

58 *Blue Mountain* *mf*

Sop.  
 A deer walks that moun - tain.

Cl. *mf*

Pno.

64 *God of Roads*

Sop.

Cl. *f*, *mp*, *f sub.*

Pno. *f*, *mp*, *f sub.*

STILL MORNING - III. IN SUMMER AND AUTUMN

10

69 *f*

Sop. I, per - e - grine. of

Cl.

Pno.

74

Sop. noon.

Cl.

Pno.

78 *mp* September

Sop. Faint gold! O think not here.

Cl. *mp*

Pno. *mp*

82 *mf* A Lady

83 *mf*

Sop. She's sun on au - tumn leaves.

Cl. *mf*

Pno.

87 Alone *mp*

Sop. I saw

Cl. *mfp* *mp* *mfp* *mp*

Pno. *mp*

93 *mfp* A Deer

Sop. day's sha - dow strike. The trees

Cl. *mfp* *mp* *mfp*

Pno.

STILL MORNING - III. IN SUMMER AND AUTUMN

12

98 *mf* **99** *Man in Desert* *mf*

Sop. *mf* rose in the dawn. His feet

Cl. *mf* *mf*

Pno. *mf*

103 **107** *Desert*

Sop. run as eyes blink

Cl. *f*

Pno. *f*

108 *f*

Sop. *f* The tent - ed au - tumn, gone!

Cl. *f*

Pno. *f*



**113** *The End*

Sop. *ff*  
Dawn \_\_\_\_\_ rose, \_\_\_\_\_ and

Cl. *ff*

Pno. *ff*  
(r.h.) (l.h.)  
Ped.

Sop. 117 *fff*  
de - - - - - sert shrunk.

Cl. *fff*

Pno. *cresc.* *fff*

**121** *High Valleys*

Sop. *p*  
In \_\_\_\_\_ sleep

Cl. *p sub.*

Pno. *p sub.*

STILL MORNING - III. IN SUMMER AND AUTUMN

14

132

Awaiting Snow

128

Sop. I filled these lands.

Cl.

Pno.

133

Sop. The well of

Cl.

Pno.

136

Sop. au - tumn: dry.

Cl.

Pno.